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homemakers' chat
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Subject: "BREAD AND MILK ORDERS" Information from food distribution officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Wednesday, February 24, 1943

Making our food supply go as far as possible, saving time and energy, conserving materials...these are the things that will bring Victory closer. And these are the war jobs that everyone of us can do right here at home. That is why our Government is issuing the wartime food orders you have been reading so much about in the newspapers. They are to help us here on the home front in this big conservation job.

For example, take the Bread Order, officially known as the Food Distribution Order No. 1. This order provides for many changes in baking and buying bread.... all designed to save time, material and labor. From now on bakers can make only 15 varieties of bread and 9 varieties of rolls. You'll still have a pretty wide choice, but you'll have to give up some of the bakery frills for the duration. But this cut in the number of varieties applies to the total number, and the bakers in each section of the country can continue making the kinds popular in that locality. Which means if your particular favorite is pumpernickel, the chances are good that you'll still be able to serve it on your table. You can readily see how cutting down the varieties of bread will save time, labor and materials. Baking 15 kinds of bread would naturally take less time and labor than baking 20 or 25. Many of the fancy breads affected by this order not only take more time and labor but often take more and richer ingredients.

One of the most important saving features of the Bread Order is the prohibition against returns. This probably doesn't mean much to you. You are so accustomed to buying bread whenever you like, always knowing it will be fresh, there has been no reason for you to think about what happens to the bread the grocer may have left

over at the end of the day. In the past this bread has been taken back by the bakers and much of it has gone into animal and poultry feed. By stopping this wasteful practice, much of the material going into bread will be saved for human consumption. Savings in returns alone in 1942 would have been about 4 and a half million pounds of shortening, 5 and a half million pounds of dried milk and 6 million pounds of sugar. In the future under the new regulation each grocer will order only the amount of bread he expects to sell in a day, but if he has some left over at night, he will put it on sale the next day instead of returning it to the bakery. As a matter of fact, day-old bread is better for many uses, such as for sandwiches or toast.

While the regulation against slicing bread for home use has occupied the headlines, it's far from the most important feature of the Bread Order. It does save some labor, and it means a saving in waxed paper, as less waxed paper is required to wrap a compact loaf of unsliced bread than to hold the looser loaf of individual slices. And remember, both paper and wax are critical materials.

Another significant feature of the Bread Order is that it provides for the enrichment of all white bread so that essential vitamins and minerals, removed in the milling process, are restored to the bread itself. Heretofore only about 70 percent of the bread sold commercially was enriched. The enrichment of white bread does not reduce the cost of making bread. In fact, it increases it, but, as a part of our wartime food program, the strengthening of nutrition standards is important to national health and well being.

The Milk Order or Food Distribution Order No. 11 is another big step in conservation on the home front. From now on you won't be able to buy milk in containers smaller than a quart from delivery wagons or from stores selling milk to be carried out. The order makes an exception where milk is to be resold for consumption on the premises. And so, of course, the order won't apply to restaurants,

hotels and soda fountains. They will still serve you your half-pint bottle. This will simplify plant and delivery operations all along the line, will save delivery space and delivery time, and will mean less handling for the same volume of milk. Still another provision of the order is that dairies load only on advance, or standing orders. This means that you will have to plan your needs more carefully. The little note in the milk bottle asking for an extra quart that day is out for the duration. This will save hours of time on the part of the deliveryman. The order also requires that a deposit be made on milk bottles. That's so you will take better care of them and return them. Studies have shown that in many cases the life of milk bottles have been doubled when a cash deposit was required. Another provision of the order is that firms selling milk buy from not more than two dairies unless the delivery from each dairy is over 300 quarts. This will explain why you may not be able to find more than two brands of milk in many stores. The purpose of this is to save time and the cost in taking care of small volume accounts. Larger and more compact loads will mean a more efficient use of delivery trucks.

To date the Government has issued 17 Food Distribution Orders and you can expect more in the future. These are vital steps in our war effort. These food orders are for the purpose of making certain that we use the resources of our country most effectively in our fight for VICTORY.

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